

Sector Sharing of Concerns Report
October 27, 2006

Attending:

Old Westbury
Oswego
Fredonia
Purchase
Empire State
Buffalo State
New Paltz
Oneonta
Geneseo
Plattsburgh

1. Retired faculty issues:

The treatment of and circumstances of faculty as they approach retirement, or have already retired varies quite dramatically from campus. There were several aspects of this that were discussed at the sector meeting:

- Emeritus status.

By the BOT policies (Article XV, Title D):

Emeritus Status. Members of the University Faculty who retire in good standing,...shall be entitled to append the term "Emeritus" to the title of their academic or administrative post after the time of retirement.

Privileges. Emeritus rank shall carry with it such of the following privileges which, in the judgment of the of the chief administrative officer, are feasible: use of the library and study facilities, use of office and laboratory space, eligibility for research grants, and representation of the University in professional groups. (Bold added)

It is therefore important that faculty recognize that (for those retiring in good standing) the title of 'emeritus' is an entitlement and cannot be withheld by the administration, but the exact rights that accrue with the title, need to be negotiated.

- Treatment of retired faculty or those in the process of retiring.

Some campuses have well-delineated steps that faculty take as they move towards retirement, however, on many campuses there is little or no planning process, and the transition is very abrupt. Campus cultures also differ widely in their treatment of faculty after retirement. On many campuses retired faculty do not feel welcome, do not feel valued, and are isolated from the campus community.

- Retired faculty are a very under utilized resource for a campus: retired faculty can be important mentors; they are often the best advocates for the campus to alumni, and other donor bases; and they are themselves a very important and lucrative donor base because of their strong ties and commitment to the campus.

➤ Recommendations:

- We recommend to the Faculty Development Group that they include retired faculty in their considerations about faculty development, and consider the potential contributions of retired faculty to the resources that support continuing faculty development.

- We recommend that Senators and CGL's make inquiries on their campuses about the procedures regarding retiring and retired faculty, and address their campus administrations regarding this issue. We also we ask that Senators and CGLs talk to their campus UUP representatives to find out what UUP guidelines there may be regarding retired faculty.
- We ask the Chancellor that he address with campus Presidents the issue of a planned process of transitions before, and inclusionary activities after, retirement for faculty.

2. Student teacher ratios and Adjunct issues

The Chancellor, as well the Chief Financial Officer referred several times to the 350 new full time faculty lines. Our sector had several concerns:

- While the Chancellor has made very clear that these are new fulltime lines, and not replacement lines, what is the status are the lines that become vacant (due to retirement or other reasons), are they being filled with full-time faculty? On many campuses, when F/T faculty retires or leave, the line gets cannibalizedand several adjuncts get hired. In other words, although many new full time faculty lines were added, across SUNY
 - Has the number of fulltime faculty increased?
 - Has the number of credit hours generated by fulltime faculty increased?
- On many campuses, the demands of the new General Education requirements have required the addition of a lot of new sections, especially in the areas of History, English, and Math. Has there been any analysis of the impact of these new requirements on fulltime and part-time faculty ratios? What is the trend SUNY-wide?
- The numbers of high school graduates are going to continue to increase in New York State for the next several years, and enrollments across SUNY are being pushed higher. What impact is this going to have on student/teacher ratios and also in the fulltime/part-time faculty ratios?
- There are many private institutions in NYS that pay much higher salaries for adjuncts than SUNY. Many campuses have directed resources towards increasing adjunct salaries for adjunct faculty, in order to increase the quality of, and competitiveness in hiring, new adjunct faculty. Our sector wanted to reaffirm their support of 'quality of life' issues for adjunct faculty, both in terms of compensation as well as other rights and privileges for adjunct faculty such as voting rights, office space and other resources. These privileges integrate adjunct faculty into campus life, and will result in better outcomes for the faculty and the students that they teach.
- It is predicted that there is a large cadre of faculty who are nearing retirement. Are there plans in place for the replacement of these faculty members, and maintaining these lines for as fulltime faculty lines? There is evidence that on some campuses, these lines that accrue from retirement or resignation of faculty are being 'warehoused', and the resources being directed to other areas.

> Recommendations

- We request that the Operations Committee continue its examination of the Adjunct/part-time/contingent faculty issue, and develop a SUNY-wide policy for addressing quality of life issues for adjunct faculty.
- We request that the Chancellor inquire into the following:
 - SUNY-wide trends in fulltime/ part-time faculty ratios, and the numbers of credit hours generated by fulltime and part-time faculty

- Impact of General Education requirements on fulltime and part-time faculty ratios SUNY-wide
- Impact of increasing enrollments on student teacher ratios and fulltime and part-time faculty ratios.

3. Issues related to Administration

Administrative turnover and transitions:

Several campuses report that they have very high administrative turnover: as many as 60% of the senior administrative staff have left within 5 years. While many campuses plan in advance of administrative change, most do not. Administrative changes have serious consequences:

- Appointment, re-appointment and tenure decisions may be affected
- Faculty and staff may become more vulnerable to administrative vagaries
- Program and strategic planning may be disrupted, changed or revised.

➤ Recommendation

- We ask that the Chancellor discuss the issue of administrative turnover with campus Presidents and ask that they engage with faculty governance as well as senior administration in developing an orderly process of planning of administrative transitions.

360 assessments of Administrative Staff:

The Chancellor has spoken many times in support of 360 degree reviews of administrators, and several campuses either have processes in place for that type of evaluation, or have begun to plan the process of such reviews. However, several campus Senators reported that when such reviews are done, they are done secretly; in some cases, when such reviews made clear that action needed to be taken, no action followed. Therefore, the efficacy of doing such reviews is questionable. Moreover, when such reviews are undertaken by a campus whose administration is not supportive of such efforts, it places faculty and faculty governance in a vulnerable position.

➤ Recommendation

- That the Chancellor clarifies whether he wants 360 degree reviews of all administrators, at the Deans level and above, done on all campuses.
- If so, that he speak about this issue to campus Presidents, and solicit their support for the implementation of such procedures on their campuses.
- That he encourage Presidents to engage with their administrations and faculty governance structures to develop procedures to make such assessments and their outcomes more transparent.

Administrative incursions in curricular issues

Several campus representatives reported that there have been instances of administrators making changes to course curricula, without consultation with faculty or faculty governance. In one instance, there were changes imposed by administration on course criteria and content, which were in contradiction with guidelines published in the Faculty Handbook of the campus; in another situation, the Student Faculty Evaluation forms were altered and implemented by the Provost on the campus, without consultation.

➤ Recommendations

- That Senators and CGL's remain vigilant about, and protective of, "*the significant obligation of faculty in the initiation, development and implementation of the educational program*" (Board of Trustees Policies, Article X.4); that they remember that "*..The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. ...The faculty sets the requirements for the degrees offered in course, determines when the requirements have been met, and authorizes the president and board to grant the degrees thus achieved...*" (AAUP Statement on government of Colleges and Universities, 1990)
- The Chancellor underscores the primacy of faculty responsibility and obligation in the areas of faculty responsibility in his discussions with campus Presidents, to prevent unwarranted incursions of administration in the areas of faculty responsibility.

4. Issues related to the K-12 and College Readiness to Teacher Education presentation

Many of the representatives at the sector meeting expressed concern that the presentation of the *K-12 and College Readiness to Teacher Education* and the ensuing discussion on teacher training and teacher education, represented a limited, critical, and potentially, misdirected analysis, implicitly sending the message that the problem is teachers and their preparation. The issue of college readiness and preparation is of salience to all of us in higher education, and while teacher education and preparation is one factor in the alignment of schools and institutions of higher education, it is only one of many factors. It was agreed that we would welcome the opportunity for broader presentations and discussions of the many aspects of this complex issue.

➤ Recommendation

- To President Weizalis: A different focus and activity, perhaps get out front by calling a conference, a SUNY summit of sorts, focusing on student achievement in New York middle and high schools, inviting papers on:
 - relationship between teacher prep (that is, certification fields), the subjects taught, and student learning;
 - Regents requirements papers on testing and students being left behind, etc.f
 - funding issues and the relationship of funding to student achievement, not just dollars in and scores out, but more importantly, analysis and prioritization of "social services" provided by urban districts vs those provided by suburban districts do not need.
 - Analysis is needed on the impact of these social costs on the educational budgets.